



RAMILLIES

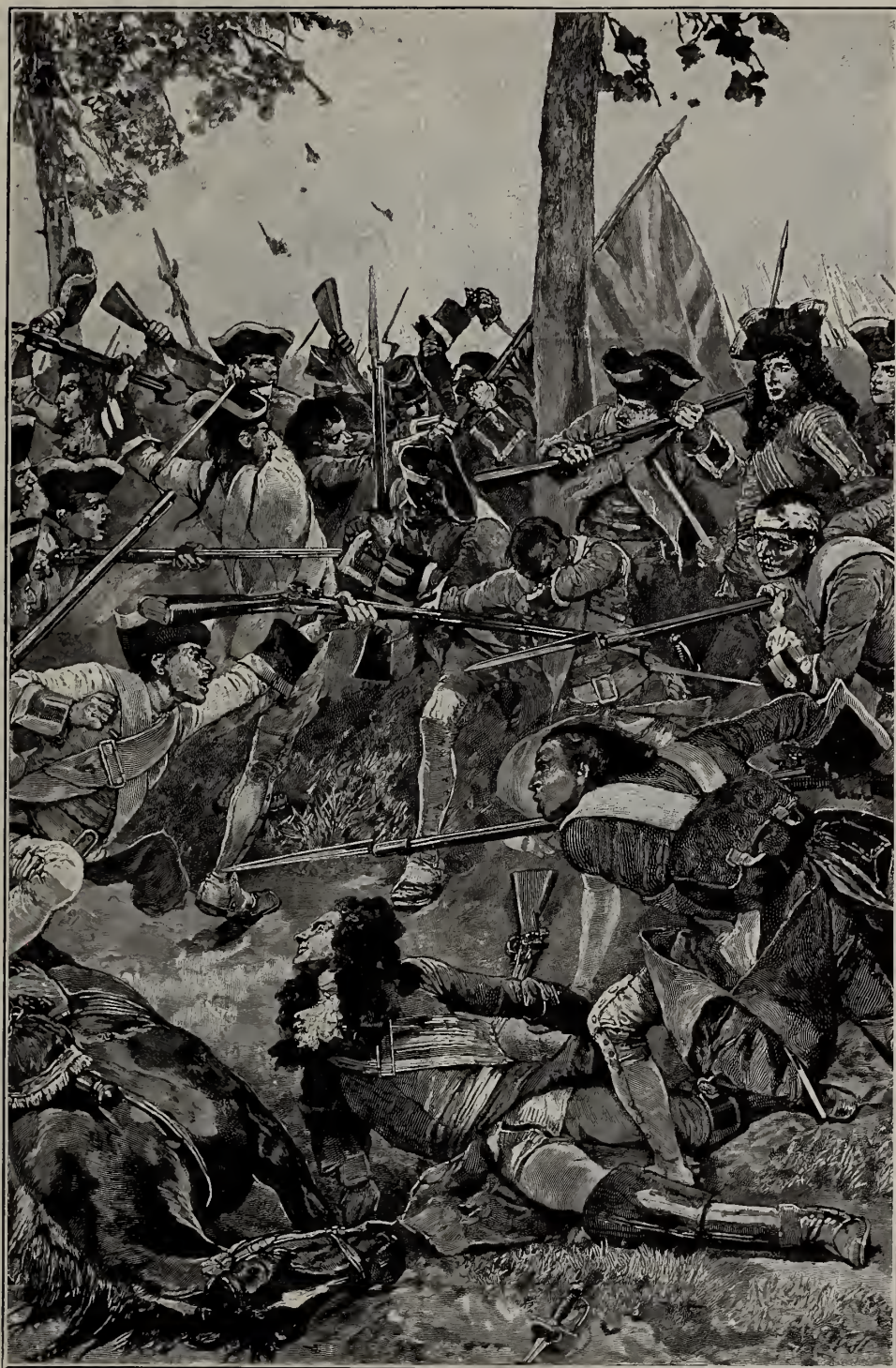
(The Reckless Charge of the Irish Exiles Fighting for France)

By the contemporary English artist, R. Caton Woodville

THE European coalitions against Louis XIV gradually exhausted France. The "Grand Monarch," as he was called, was slow to realize this. Shut in his magnificent royal palace of Versailles he knew little of the real state of his country, except that taxes were increasingly difficult to collect and armies harder to create. In his old age he saw what he thought the great opportunity of his life. The royal line of Spain had died out; and being related to them by marriage, he secured the throne for his grandson Philip. He thought thus to unite the two countries. "Go," he said magniloquently to Philip, "there are no longer any Pyrenees." The real result of this attempt was to rearouse the anxiety of Europe at his increasing power and thus unite all his enemies in a last great war against him. This "War of the Spanish Succession" brought forward the celebrated English general Marlborough, who defeated the French armies in a series of tremendous battles, of which Ramillies was perhaps the most decisive.

One ally France had against the rest of Europe. That was Ireland. Protestant England had crushed Catholic Ireland; and thousands of Irishmen fled to France and formed whole regiments in Louis's armies. He had an "Irish Brigade" which at Ramillies charged the hated English with such reckless fury as to be almost exterminated. But no individual valor could rally exhausted France; Louis, perforce, abandoned his schemes of conquest and sought peace.









THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, THE GREAT ARTERY OF THE WEST, AND THE GREAT HIGHWAY OF THE SOUTH.

BY JAMES M. COOK, ESQ., OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, which flows from the north-west to the south-east, is the longest river in the world, and the most fertile valley in the United States. It is the great artery of the West, and the great highway of the South. It is the life-blood of the continent, and the life-blood of the nation. It is the great artery of the West, and the great highway of the South. It is the life-blood of the continent, and the life-blood of the nation.

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THE MISSISSIPPI BUBBLE

(Speculators in Mad Excitement Over France's Hugest Stock Gambling Scheme.)

From the French historical series by Alphonse de Neuville

LOUIS XIV died in 1715, and his death was hailed by his people with rejoicing. He had increased the public debt from Mazarin's eighty million to five hundred million dollars. His successor was his great grandson, Louis XV, a child of five. So there was a long regency and peace, and France began to recover from her exhaustion. A Scotch financier, John Law, was put in charge of her treasury; and under him Paris went through that maddest of all speculative furors, known as the "Mississippi Bubble."

Law attempted to support the government by mere paper money. That is, he issued bills promising to exchange them for gold if any one wanted it, but really he had no gold in the government coffers to redeem these bills. At the same time he planned to exploit France's vast American possessions on the Mississippi River, by colonizing these and reaping profits from them. Every one was caught by this money-making scheme and bought stock in his Mississippi company. Never was such frantic speculation; the stock sold for forty times its face value. Men made and lost enormous fortunes in a day. At length everybody awoke suddenly to the worthlessness of what they had purchased so dearly. Thousands of investors were ruined; and Law fled from the country. The government, having gained no gold, repudiated all its issues of paper money; and many thousands more were reduced to poverty.





A. J. N.

V 62

CH. BARBANT.





THE WORLD OF LOUIS XV.

The Minister of the Interior, Receives the Chief of the Mission.

A Frenchman, by the name of Louis XV.

At the time of Louis XV. the French nation was in a state of great prosperity. The king was a man of great talents, and a great lover of the arts. He was a man of great power, and a great lover of his people. He was a man of great wisdom, and a great lover of his country. He was a man of great courage, and a great lover of his honor. He was a man of great strength, and a great lover of his health. He was a man of great beauty, and a great lover of his life. He was a man of great wealth, and a great lover of his money. He was a man of great power, and a great lover of his people. He was a man of great wisdom, and a great lover of his country. He was a man of great courage, and a great lover of his honor. He was a man of great strength, and a great lover of his health. He was a man of great beauty, and a great lover of his life. He was a man of great wealth, and a great lover of his money.

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THE WORLD OF LOUIS XV

(His Mistress, Madame Pompadour, Receives the Child Musician Mozart)

From a painting by the Spanish artist, V. de Paredes

AS the little lad Louis XV grew up, he knew really nothing whatever about the needs of France, or about the best ways of government, or even about his own duty to his people. Here was indeed a sad and tragic thing. A boy was taught that all France belonged to him, and was taught nothing of the obligations on his own side. He was even brought up deliberately in idleness and vicious pleasures by the regents, who wanted him to leave the government in their hands. So Louis XV had no thought of morality. He lived openly with various mistresses, who exercised unlimited power over his weak mind, and became one after another the real queens of France.

Most noted of these temporary queens was an army-contractor's wife, whom Louis ennobled under the title of Madame de Pompadour. She ruled France for nearly twenty years, until her death in 1764. She plunged France into wars to gratify her whims and made peace when weary of the excitement. It was under her contemptible régime that France lost all her great colonial possessions in America and India.

To the gorgeous court of Mme. Pompadour came one remarkable figure, the wonderful musical composer, Mozart, who was then a child of six, an infant prodigy at the piano, touring Europe under his father. Little Mozart was well trained in all the baby gallantries likely to win favor, and created a furor in the idle court.









AN AUSTRIAN PRINCESS IN FRANCE

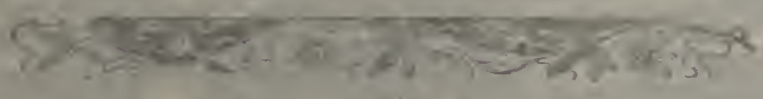
Reception for the Princess at the Ministry of Finance
Marie A. d'Orléans and Her Husband, the Duke of Nemours, at the Ministry of Finance

Paris, January 10, 1870. (The Princess and Duke of Nemours)

The Princess and Duke of Nemours arrived in Paris on the 10th of January, 1870. The Princess, who is the daughter of the Duke of Nemours, and the Duke, who is the son of the Duke of Nemours, are both of the House of Orleans. The Princess is a very beautiful woman, and the Duke is a very handsome man. They are both very intelligent and very kind people. They are both very popular in France, and they are both very well liked by the people. They are both very good friends of the Emperor and Empress, and they are both very good friends of the King and Queen of the Belgians. They are both very good friends of the King and Queen of the Netherlands, and they are both very good friends of the King and Queen of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

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AN AUSTRIAN PRINCESS IN FRANCE

(Marie Antoinette and Her Husband, the Future Louis XVI, Hold Their First Reception for the Gorgeous Courtiers of France)

From a painting by the German artist, Karl Otto

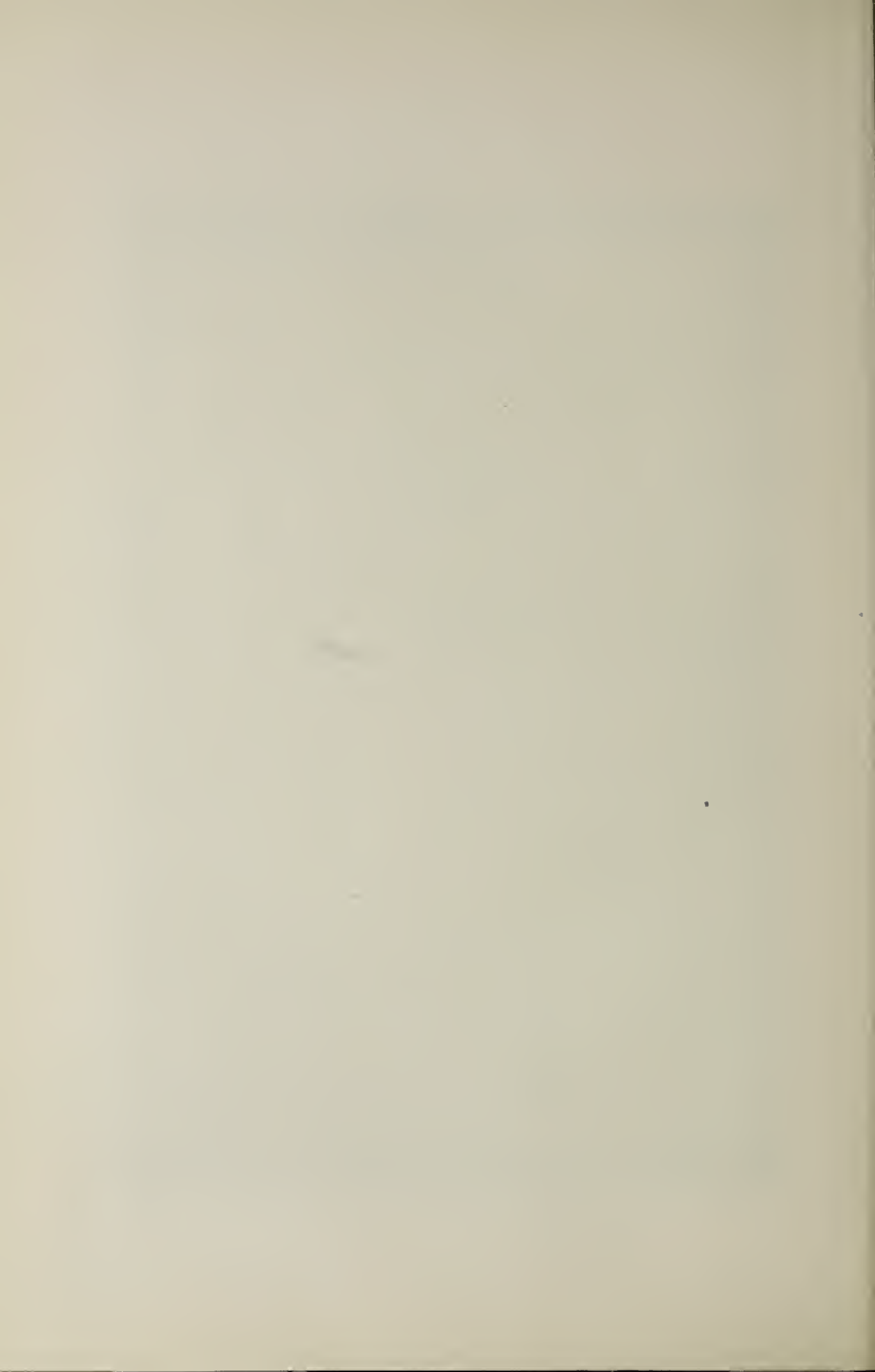
THE gulf between kings and people in France grew ever wider. The peasantry were ground to starvation by increasing taxes; the court continued its immeasurable extravagance. The nobles lived chiefly upon the royal treasury, drawing salaries and pensions for all sorts of trivial offices. Those who possessed estates wrung from their tenants the last drop they could, to uphold their gorgeousness at court.

Into this world there came a young princess, little able to understand it, trained in that other most pompous European court, Austria. Marie Antoinette was a daughter of the celebrated Austrian Empress, Maria Theresa. As such she was naturally sought as the bride of the French prince, Louis XV's grandson and heir, afterward Louis XVI.

This young couple were well-meaning enough. Prince Louis was a slow and heavy lad; but he had really meditated on his position, and wanted to help the suffering people of France. So, too, his princess wanted to be loved by everybody. But her lightheartedness combined with her Austrian hauteur to offend almost every one in France. And the youthful Louis's ponderous goodness was not nearly so attractive to the perverted French court as was Louis XV's extravagance and heedlessness. So when the old king died, Louis XVI and his Austrian queen began to reign in an atmosphere of dislike and suspicion, of ever-increasing money troubles, and a gradually rising menace from the ruined people.









THE FRENCH REVOLUTION BEGINS

Mirzaan Defies the Command of the King to Dismiss the Assembly

THAT the king had been dead to worse. But in the first second it was only left anywhere for the young king Louis VII and his court. His council advised him to summon a States General of all the powers of the kingdom to see what could be done about reforming these States General. This was considered much better than they consisted of only nobles in the first place, and voted separately. These were Estates with the commons clergy and the nobles. But when they met the commons or Third Estate, on good naturally enough the same plan of reform which was not the nobles and clergy who paid no vote whatever, would assume some part of the burden of taxation. Finally naturally perhaps the other two estates had always voted on this plan, so now King Louis declared that the representatives of the Third Estate should be as numerous as those of the other two combined. France woke to the great there was an assembly that might accomplish something.

the government of Europe and only force would scatter them. The Third Estate should disperse, Mirabeau made the when a court page brought the king's order that the disorderly members be removed to accept this decision; and the other two. Then the commons found a leader in the great increased importance the Third Estate would be outvoted by much Estate was sent to the separately. Thus despite its Bill when the assembly gathered, the king decided that





THE FRENCH REVOLUTION BEGINS

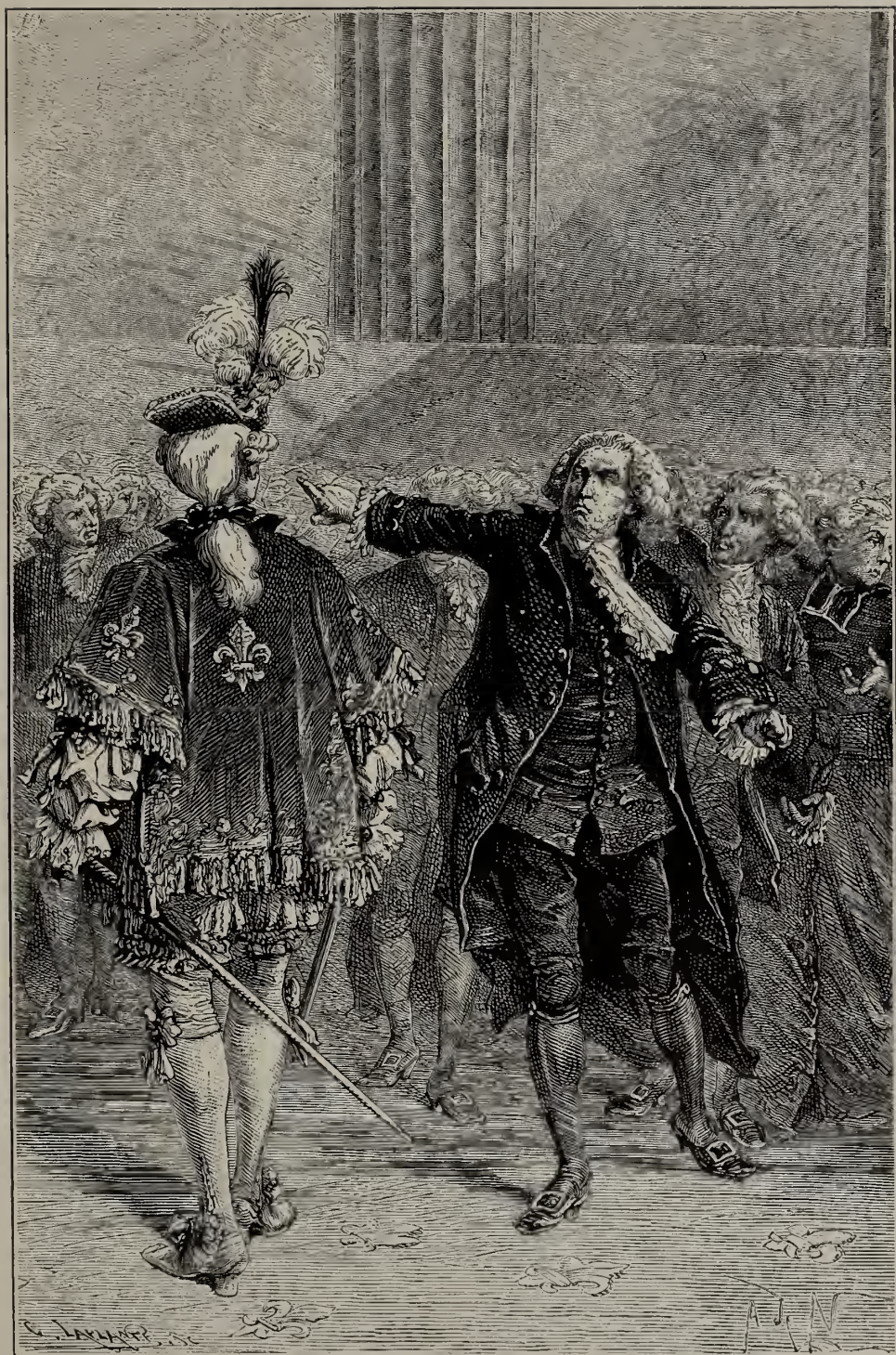
(Mirabeau Defies the Command of the King to Disperse the Assembly)

From the series illustrative of French history, by Alphonse de Neuville

THE finances of France went from bad to worse. Finally there seemed no money left anywhere for the young king Louis XVI and his court. His councillors advised him to summon a "States General" of all the powers of the kingdom to see what could be done about reforming things. States Generals had never accomplished much because they consisted of three equal bodies or "Estates," which voted separately. These three Estates were the nobles, the clergy and the commons. Every time they met, the commons or "Third Estate" proposed, naturally enough, the same plan of reform, which was that the nobles and clergy, who paid no taxes whatever, should assume some part of the burden of taxation. Equally naturally perhaps, the other two estates had always voted down this plan. So now King Louis declared that the representatives of the Third Estate should be as numerous as those of the other two combined. France woke to interest, here was an assembly that might accomplish something.

But when the assembly gathered, the king decided that each Estate was still to vote separately. Thus despite its increased membership the Third Estate would be outvoted by the other two. Then the commons found a leader in the great orator Mirabeau. He refused to accept this decision; and when a court page brought the king's order that the disobedient Third Estate should disperse, Mirabeau made the celebrated answer which declared that its members were the true government of France and only force would scatter them.









FRANCE'S "INDEPENDENCE DAY"

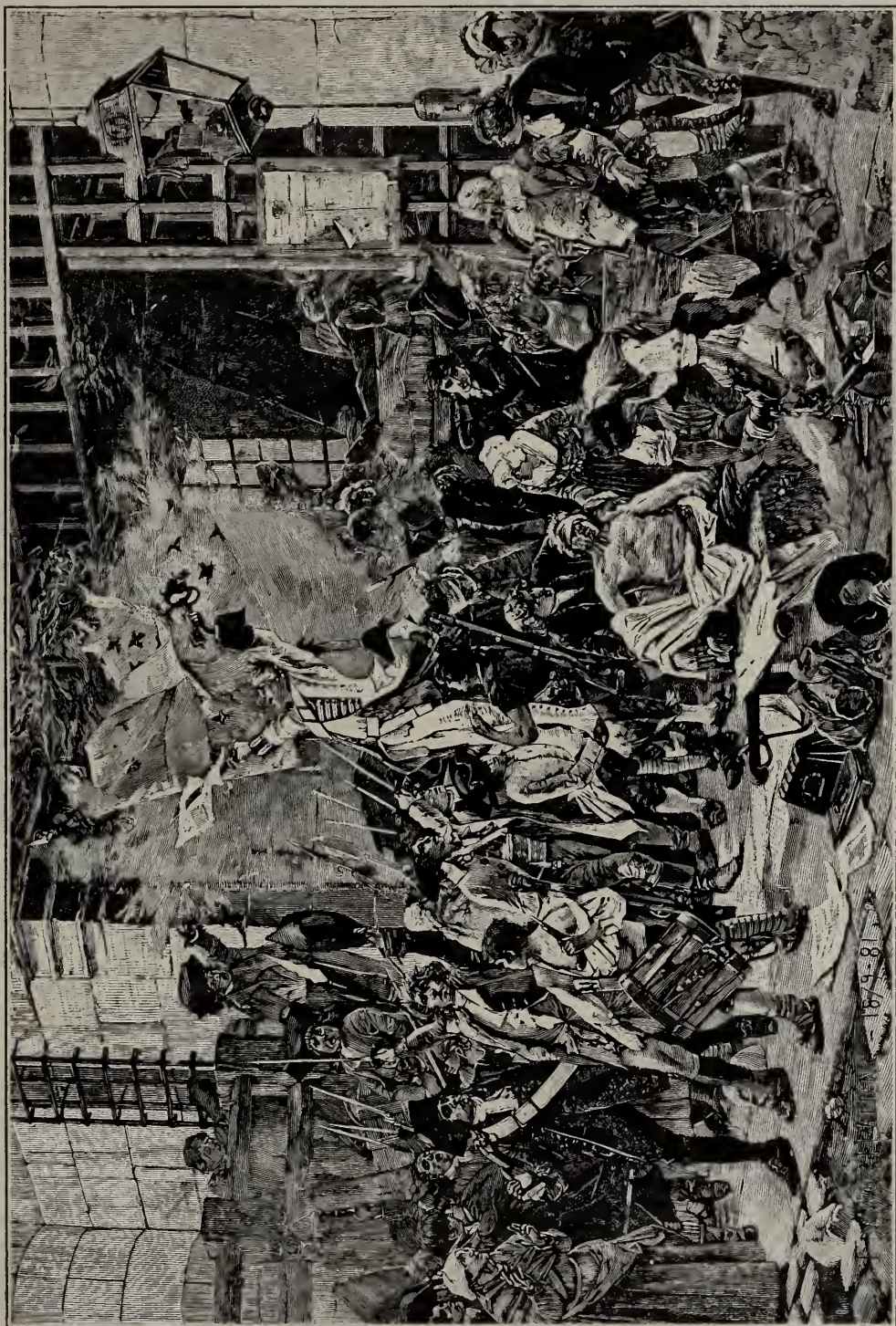
(July 14, 1789, the Parisians Storming the Bastille)

Painted in 1881 by the French artist, François Flameng

KING LOUIS XVI did not use force to disperse the Third Estate. Instead he let them legislate, he let them prepare a constitution by which he was to cease to be "the State" and share his power with an elective parliament. Thus began the first phase of the French Revolution, the philosophical, legislative part. A second more startling phase soon followed. The people of Paris were heart and soul with their assembly. The king began gathering soldiers as if threatening it. The Parisians seized the arms in the royal armory and then by a sudden impulse stormed the Bastille, the terrible prison in which despotism held the victims of its caprice as prisoners often for life without any trial. The Bastille was a mighty fortress in the midst of Paris streets, a fortress which might easily have been held not merely against a mob but against an army. But no preparations had been made for its defense. The few guards resisted for a while, then surrendered and were massacred. The cells were broken open; prisoners who had not seen the light of day for a generation, prisoners who had even forgotten who they were, were all released; and the mob paraded the streets of Paris in triumph displaying the huge key of the Bastille.

"Why, it is a revolt!" cried poor King Louis in surprise. "Nay, sire," responded a courtier, "it is a revolution." In that massacre of the surrendered guards was heard the first snarl of the wild beast which was soon to dominate France.









THE REVOLUTION IN THE PROVINCES

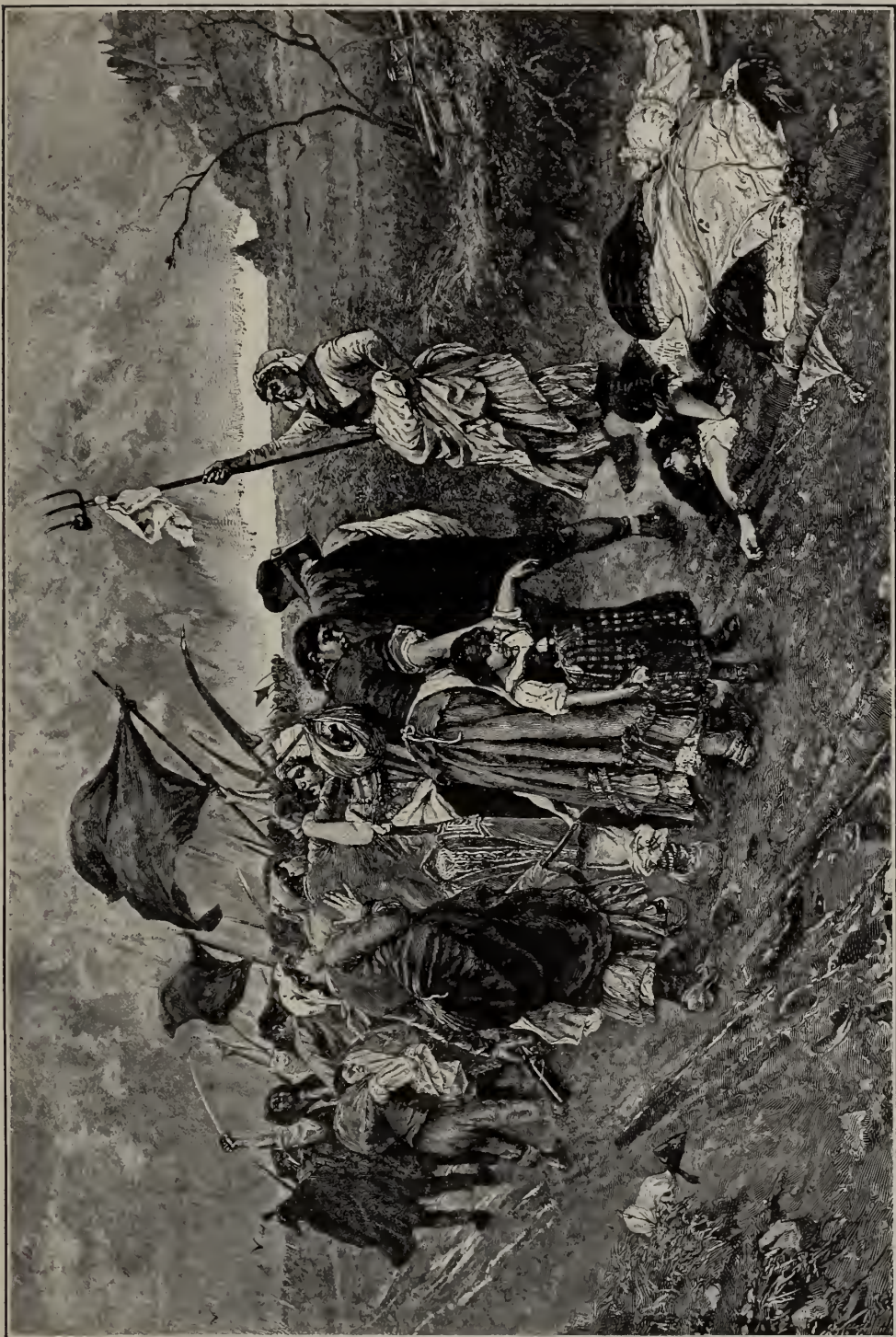
(The Peasants March in Mobs to the Murder of "Aristocrats")

Painted by the contemporary Russian artist, Paul Swedomsky

A THIRD stage of this tremendous Revolution now became startlingly manifest. The people of Paris were on the whole shrewd and intelligent; they might in a moment of frenzy burst into sudden bloodshed, as at the Bastille; but they still desired, as did their Assembly, to make some arrangement with the king; they discussed their revolution thoughtfully, they planned and argued for the future. But, outside of Paris and a few other cities, the population of France consisted of an utterly ignorant, embruted, starving peasantry. These hated their cruel masters, the aristocracy, with a deadly hatred. They had been held under only by force.

Now came a rumor from Paris to these peasants that hereafter the people were to rule, that in the capital the king's soldiers were fraternizing with the people and refusing to shoot them down. At once, everywhere through France, bands of peasants arose, armed only with the rude weapons of the field. These felt that if the people were indeed to rule, their first act should be of vengeance. All law and order ceased. The foulest passions rioted amid ignorance and bestiality. From end to end of the fair land, flames lit the sky. The rich country chateaus were stormed by mad mobs who cared nothing for death so long as they could reach, and glut their vengeance on, some hated aristocrat. The French nobles fled to the cities, or they fled from France. Those who faced the fury of the peasantry, died.







WING LOU'S ATTEMPTED FLIGHT

The King and Queen R. ...
D. ...
P. ...



KING LOUIS'S ATTEMPTED FLIGHT

(The King and Queen, Recognized Despite Their Disguises, Are Sent Back to Paris)

By the contemporary French artist, Georges Roussin, of Saint Denis

KING LOUIS XVI was so well-meaning despite his dullness that it seems possible he might have come to some agreement with his people, had it not been for his queen and his nobles. The queen, Marie Antoinette, "the Austrian" as she was called, was so haughty that she resented all yielding to the Assembly. She wanted her husband to call out his troops and fight; and most of the nobility eagerly upheld her attitude. The fact that the army had gone over almost in a body to the Assembly, did not check this aristocratic insistence on impossibilities. So the king wavered between the two parties; and an angry mob seized him and his court and brought them into Paris, where they were practically prisoners. By this time most of the nobles had fled from France, and Louis resolved to do the same.

Disguised as a tradesman and his wife, the king and queen traveled with their children as far as Varennes. Here they were recognized, and despite all the king's pleadings and commands, the rebellious citizens arrested him and forced the entire party to return to Paris.

After that, king and people lost all confidence in each other. Attempts were still made to patch matters up; but Louis appealed secretly to the other monarchs of Europe, to save him from his people. The kings promised aid and marched their armies to the frontier. France declared itself a republic and beheaded Louis as a traitor.











THE MARSEILLAISE

(The Author of the Revolutionary Hymn of France Sings it for the First Time)

Painted in 1891 by Hans G. Jentsch, of Munich

IF the sovereigns of Europe had been anxious to aid the unhappy Louis XVI, they were still more anxious to crush this republic, this rebellion of the common people against kings. If it was not checked, their own crowns would be in danger. Moreover they expected that victory over this mob who had no trained generals nor any aristocrats whatever to lead them, would be a very easy matter. So Prussia marched an army into France, and so did Austria. To the astonishment of everybody both of these well-drilled armies were roundly defeated by the French forces, raw recruits hastily gathered and ill armed. Europe learned then the tremendous power of patriotism. These poor Frenchmen were fighting for themselves, for their own homes, not at the mandate of a king, but for self-government. All France had become a military camp to defy advancing Europe.

Roget de L'Isle, a young officer, wrote a patriotic marching song and sang it before some friends. They were roused to his own enthusiasm and the song spread like wild-fire through his neighborhood in southern France. An army of volunteers from Marseilles marched to the aid of Paris chanting the song as they advanced. So it was called the "Marseillaise" and adopted as the national song of the people, the song of revolutionary France. As such it was soon heard all over Europe. It has been the song most widely sung in all the world.





Hans S. Jentsch
München 91.







WAR IN LA VENDÉE

(The Peasants of Brittany Fight to Uphold the Monarchy)

By the contemporary artist, Evariste Carpentier, of Belgium

IT was not to be expected that a people so new at self-government as these suddenly risen French republicans should manage all things well. Some of the legislation that issued from Paris was foolish; some was wicked. The rest of France objected. Paris was arrogant. Dispute grew bitter. Scarcely had the young republic realized its own strength by repelling Prussia and Austria, before civil war broke out in France itself. The governing Assembly in Paris proved itself as tyrannical as any king could be. With wholesale slaughter it suppressed rebellions in many parts of France.

Most notable of all these counter revolts against the wildly radical republicans of Paris was the revolt in Brittany. Here the peasants, having suffered less than those of central France, had remained at heart loyal to their kings. The inhabitants of the district of Brittany known as La Vendée were roused by aristocratic leaders to defy the Republic; and they defeated one force after another which the Parisians sent against them. Their leader, a young enthusiast named Count Henry de Laroche-jaquelin, led them in one desperate charge after another. The revolt became a war and lasted for several years before it was finally put down. All Brittany was desolated by the republican armies; and even after the last opposition was abandoned, the republicans made themselves infamous by wholesale executions and most hideous murders.









THE REIGN OF TERROR

(The "Girondists," Leaders of the Moderate Republicans, Sent to Execution)

By the German master, Carl von Piloty, of Munich (1826-1886)

WHEN the Parisian party had crushed all provincial rivals they began quarreling among themselves. So much blood had been shed that death had lost its awesomeness, and human life its dignity. Murder in the name of law was everywhere. King Louis and many of his councillors had dealt falsely with the people, promising to aid them while secretly working against them, and calling foreign armies into France. So, at length, all the country became enveloped in a maze of suspicion. Even republicans with different policies distrusted one another. Finally the Girondists, the moderate party in the Assembly, the truest patriots in France, were charged as traitors by the radicals or Jacobins. The accused were hurried before packed tribunals, were all condemned together, and were beheaded (June, 1793).

After that France went mad. No man was safe. The Paris mob suspected treason on every side, and frantically applauded every execution. If it were merely known that a man or woman had once belonged to the aristocracy that was enough; the cry "An Aristocrat" meant death. Political parties condemned one another wholesale to the guillotine. To find oneself voting with a minority in the Assembly was to face execution. Spies were everywhere. This was the "Reign of Terror."

It ended when its chief leader, Robespierre, was guillotined in his turn. Then the reaction set in; the judicial murders ceased.







A BOY KING AND HIS MASTERS

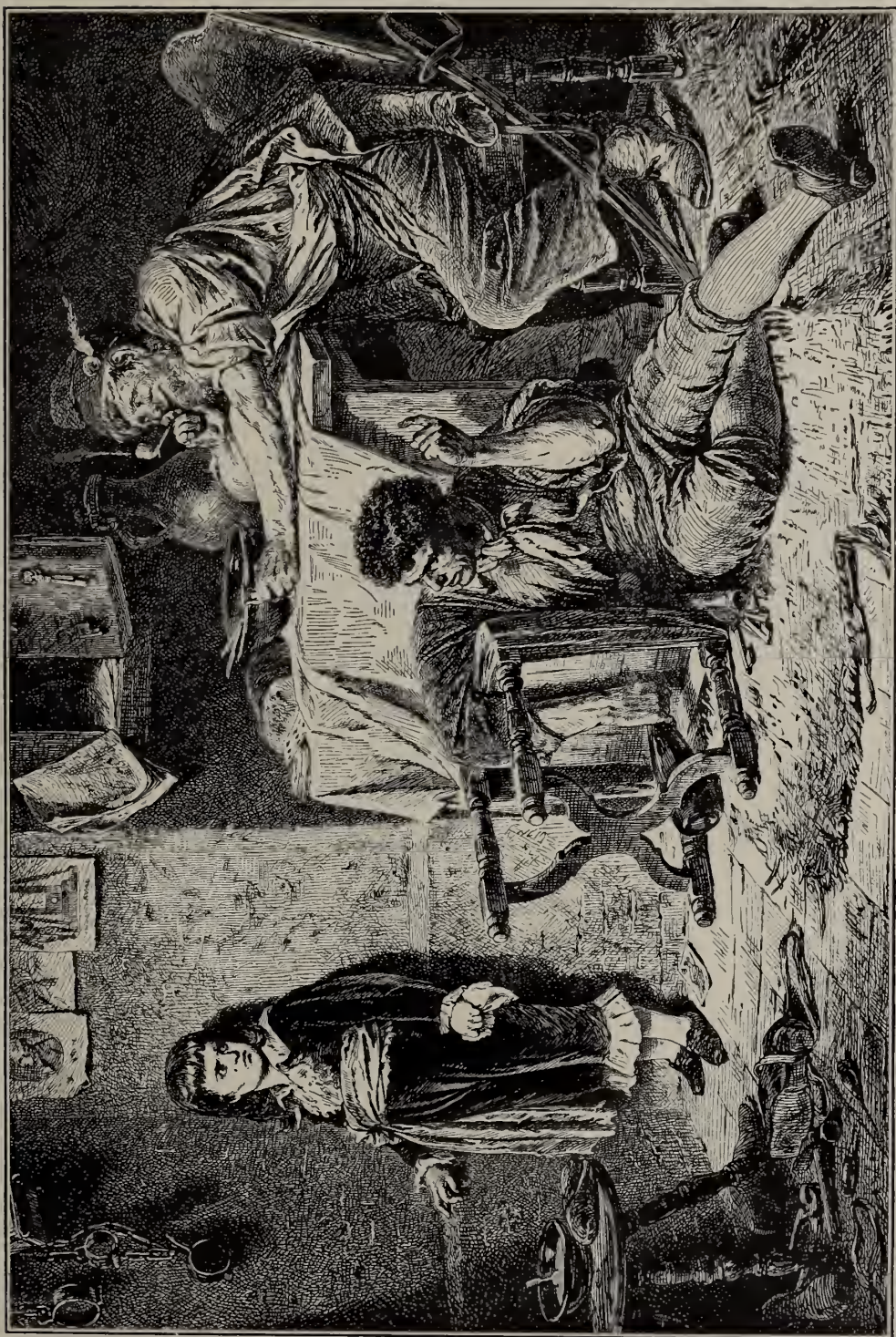
(The Son of Louis XVI Abused by the Cobbler Simon and His Friends)

From a painting by Carl von Piloty, of Munich (1826-1886)

THE tragic fate which had befallen the old French aristocracy, they whose arrogance and obstinacy had brought on the whole upheaval, has been already suggested. The nobles who were not fugitives in foreign lands were dead. The sufferings of the royal family form also a pitiful picture. After King Louis was beheaded, his wife met the same fate. Their daughter after long suffering escaped. Their little son, the heir to his father's throne, probably perished in France, though his death has never been absolutely established and for many years afterward various impostors appeared to claim his rank.

What we know of him is that after his father's execution, the other kings of Europe proclaimed the little lad king as Louis XVII. This angered the French republicans, and in defiant answer they apprenticed this lad of eight years to a Paris shoemaker, Simon. The ignorant and brutal cobbler mocked and jeered at the boy, bullied him and beat him; and, as all Paris was in desperate straits for food, master and apprentice half starved together. Probably little Louis died under this misery. At least his death was reported and accepted in Paris a couple of years later; and the European monarchs then proclaimed Louis XVI's brother as King Louis the XVIII. As this new king had fled from France with the other nobles, he was safe from the vengeance of his so-called subjects.





wit. It has been said that the courtiers of this period had no *home* life, and the charge seems sadly true. They had no time for real happiness.

With all this resplendent world centering round one man, and a vain man at that, you can imagine what flattery was heaped upon him. His court declared him the "sun" of the universe, and Louis, accepting their homage, took for his emblem a rising sun.

All these royal extravagances made the country's money flow like water. And we have not yet spoken of Louis's two most extravagant tastes—for war and for building. These, he felt, were the two things best calculated to display his splendor to the outside world. Bridges and good roads multiplied all through France, and huge fortresses rose on her every frontier, the work of Louis's famous military engineer, Vauban. You can imagine, too, what enormous palaces were required to house Louis's multitudinous court, with its endless retinue of servants. The magnificent edifices and park at Versailles form the King's best-known effort in this direction.

Yet, despite all its gilded splendor, this era plainly shows the disadvantages of concentrating all power in the hands of one man. However well-meaning, Louis could not help but lose all true sense of the proportions of life. He spent much on the roads and bridges for his people, but still more on the fortresses for glory, and most of all on himself and his pleasure houses. Nor could he see any disproportion in this! Was he not the centre of the universe for which the rest existed?

Colbert, a man of unquestioned financial genius, managed the King's money affairs, and succeeded at first in making France prosperous. At the same time he drew from the land such abundant revenues as its kings had never before known. Yet even Colbert could not keep pace with the boundless extravagance of the court, and he failed at last, and died in despair. Everything fell back into disorder, and then came ruin.

During Louis's early days these evil consequences lay hidden; only the surface splendor was visible, and all Europe was dazzled. The petty German princes struggled to imitate the "Grand Monarch" with his authors, his court, his forts and his palaces; and most of all, they sought to copy his absolutism in government. For a time, at least, Germany became a mere tail to the French kite, feebly soaring after, where Louis led.

For war, the young monarch had his two great generals, Turenne and Condé; and he speedily let the world know his bellicose intentions. The French and Spanish ambassadors in London had a childish squabble about precedence, and Louis took the matter up in earnest. He threatened war, and compelled the decaying Spanish kingdom to consent that the Frenchman should stand first. In Rome, too, finding his ambassador not treated with sufficient

respect, Louis insisted that the Pope should not only publicly apologize, but should erect a monument in Rome recording his punishment and its cause.

Louis had been married by Mazarin to a Spanish princess. He now found an excuse in her name, for claiming the Spanish possessions in Flanders (1667). Invading them with Turenne, he seized city after city, almost without opposition. At the same time Condé took possession of Franche Comté.

Spain was too feeble to resist; but all Europe was seriously alarmed, and the first coalition, of England, Sweden, and Holland, was formed against France. Turenne and Condé would have had their master push on, for none of the menacing powers were ready for war; but Louis yielded and made a peace, by which he kept what he had won in Flanders, but restored Franche Comté.

Holland was the land which feared Louis most; for it lay just beyond Spanish Flanders, the next morsel for the voracious Frenchman to devour. So it was Holland that was most vigorous in its opposition, and Louis learned to hate the land with a bitter personal enmity. The strength of Spain had been broken in the effort to conquer sturdy little Holland; now France was to batter herself against the same unyielding wall.

Louis laid all his plans to this end. The English King, Charles II., needed money, and became a regular pensioner of France, obedient to its monarch's will. Sweden was dissuaded from the Dutch alliance by the same method; and Louis rushed fiercely upon his isolated foe (1672).

Holland seemed helpless before the giant assault. The whole southern half of the land was occupied by the French armies, and only the city of Amsterdam held out. In their despair the Dutch burghers talked of embarking with their goods upon their fleet, and sailing away to some other continent. But William of Orange, the future King William III. of England, now took control of their counsels. Under his dauntless leadership, they cut their dykes and let the ocean overflow their land. One foe drove out the other; the French fled before the seas.

A second European coalition against France was hastily formed by William, who thus saved his own country, but brought evil upon two of his allies, Spain and Germany. These two powers, exhausted by the Thirty Years' War, proved no match for France. Condé again snatched Franche Comté from Spain. Turenne ravaged the Palatinate, the German Rhineland, Louis having given deliberate orders that all that part of Germany should be made a desert, so as to be unable to support an army against him. Moreover, the French admiral, Du Quesne, thrice defeated the Dutch fleets in the Mediterranean, completely crushing them and making France mistress of that important sea.

There were other lesser victories and some defeats; but Turenne was slain

In battle, Condé retired from active life, and finally the enraged English people seemed on the point of forcing their King to join the alliance against France. Then Louis consented to a peace, the peace of Nymwegen (1678), which marks the zenith of his power. Franche Comté and most of Flanders were permanently attached to France, and the French parliament ostentatiously conferred upon their King the title of Louis the Great.

Ten years of nominal peace followed, during which the French Monarch continued to seize one German city after another. His excuses for these robberies were of the flimsiest, but the German Empire was too feeble to defend itself. In 1681 he snatched the great city of Strasburg, on the Rhine, and turned it into a tremendous fortress, the bulwark of his kingdom to the east, and the defense of France against Germany for nearly two centuries.

We have seen Louis quarrelling with the Pope. His troubles in that quarter became more and more violent, and the King, wishing to show that he only upheld his rights and was not really a bad Catholic, began persecuting his Protestant subjects. Thus he reopened the old religious troubles which had before proved the bane of France. Louis's queen was dead. He had always been more or less under the influence of mistresses, and now he was completely devoted, and probably secretly married, to Madame de Maintenon, the widow of the well-known author, Scarron.

Madame de Maintenon was a strict Catholic, and encouraged the King in his new policy of persecution. Finally, in 1685, he formally revoked the Edict of Nantes, which had granted the Huguenots freedom of worship. Protestantism was abolished in the kingdom, and at the same time the Protestants were forbidden to emigrate. Property was confiscated, ministers were executed. The Huguenots were no longer strong enough for armed resistance; but by degrees the more resolute of them managed to flee from France, despite Louis's orders and the efforts of his spies. They settled in Germany, some in the southern part of our own country, and some in other lands. It is estimated that France lost upward of half a million of her most valuable subjects—an earnest, able, moral, industrious people, whom she could ill spare. In the wars that followed, whole regiments of Huguenots were enlisted against France from her own exiles.

In 1688, William of Orange became King of England, and from that moment England became the centre of a determined resistance to the aggressions of the Bourbon monarchs. Louis supported the exiled English king, James II., against William, and lent James an army to invade Ireland. James was defeated at the Boyne, and the Frenchmen returned home, carrying with them large numbers of the Irish people, who loyally insisted on clinging to the fortunes of James, and became among the most gallant soldiers of France, thereby partly recompensing her for the loss of the Huguenots.

There was a second European war against France, extending from 1688 to 1697. The French marshal, Luxemburg, won several brilliant victories on the Rhine frontier, and the Palatinate was devastated even more cruelly than before; but the Austrian general, Prince Eugene, now appeared, and had rather the best of the French in Italy. At sea Admiral Tourville was defeated by the British off La Hogue, but was twice victorious over them, at Beachy Head (1690) and at Lagos (1693). The peace of 1697 left all parties with their possessions just about as they had been before this blind expenditure of wealth and blood.

The long strain began to tell upon France. Her prosperity was disappearing; Louis was grown old; the glamour of his fame was failing; his wealth was gone; his best generals were dead, or, like the Huguenot admiral, Du Quesne, driven from his service. And now came Louis's greatest opportunity, his chance to realize one of his dearest life-dreams, and his final effort to retain the grandeur that was fast slipping away from him.

The last direct heir to the Spanish throne died in 1700. The Austrian Emperors, the younger branch of the Hapsburgs, claimed to succeed their relations in Spain. Louis XIV. advanced the claim of his Spanish wife. She was long dead, but her rights, he declared, had descended to his grandson, Philip. The dying Spanish King made a will in favor of this Philip; but to give the crown to him was practically to place it in Louis's hands, and Europe was not likely to permit such a dangerous increase of his power.

Louis seems to have hesitated before accepting the baneful gift, but finally despatched his grandson into Spain, with, according to legend, the farewell words: "Go, my son! There are no longer any Pyrenees." Spain welcomed Philip readily, but Austria protested. All Europe joined the protest, and the War of the Spanish Succession was begun (1701-1713). England, Holland, Austria, Germany, and Portugal were arrayed against France and feeble Spain.

This was the war of the great victories of the English general, Marlborough, and the Austrian, Prince Eugene. Louis was at last exhausted and over-matched. At first he was successful. Bavaria joined him; his Marshal Villars outgeneraled the Austrians, and in 1703 threatened to capture Vienna. But a Protestant revolt in France called Villars home, and Marlborough and Eugene, attacking his incompetent successors, won the first of their triumphs at Blenheim in 1704. This battle drove the French back to the Rhine, and conquered Bavaria for the allies.

In 1706 Marlborough defeated the French at Ramillies, despite the heroism of the Irish regiments fighting for France. This battle established Marlborough in Flanders; and at the same time Eugene forced the French out of Italy

by his victory at Turin. In Spain the Austrian claimant to the throne drove Philip from Madrid. Marshal Villars, however, partially restored the balance by defeating the Germans along the Rhine.

In 1708, Marlborough and Eugene advanced together to the French frontier in Flanders and won the battle of Oudenarde. They entered France, and some of their troops even raided as far as Versailles. Louis, broken and humbled, sued for peace. But one of the conditions stipulated by the allies, was that he should join them with his armies in driving his grandson Philip out of Spain. This Louis refused to do. "If I must make war," he said, "I will fight my enemies rather than my own child."

In his despair he did what he had never before condescended to do, appealed to his people for help, explaining his position and bidding his subjects be judges between him and his enemies. The appeal was successful. The allies had thought France exhausted and helpless at their feet, but to their amazement an army of over a hundred thousand men rose as if by magic to replace those that had been destroyed. The King's royal plate and jewels went to the mint, along with those of many a lesser man, to furnish supplies. Villars was placed in command, and met Marlborough and Eugene at Malplaquet in 1709. They defeated him; but they lost twenty thousand men, while his loss was not half so great, and he was promptly ready to renew the struggle. "Another such defeat," he wrote Louis, "will save France."

The allies wearied of the endless contest, especially England, whose wealth was supporting all the other nations. The war languished. Finally England withdrew from the coalition, and the Peace of Utrecht followed (1713). France retained her European territories undiminished, and Philip was acknowledged King of Spain, though with the loss of Gibraltar and all the Spanish possessions in Italy and Flanders.

The French accepted with joy a peace which at least brought them no dishonor. They would probably have accepted any other as gladly, for the land was exhausted, the peasantry dying off by thousands, of privation. In about ten years the population of France had sunk from fifteen to twelve millions. Her debt had increased to half a billion dollars, and she was borrowing money at four hundred per cent.

Louis himself, utterly worn out, was now permitted to die in such quiet as his buzzing, bickering court afforded. He had been left singularly alone in his old age. His son and two of his grandsons were dead. His only surviving grandson was in Spain; his eldest great-grandson also died, and the King's heir was his second great-grandson, a little child. Intrigues of every sort surrounded the throne. The successive deaths of so many princes of the royal house naturally roused suspicions of murder. All men were uneasy and insecure, and

they waited with impatience for Louis to depart, that they might seize some share of power in the regency to follow.

The "Grand Monarch" seemed forgotten before his death. Even Madame De Maintenon half abandoned him. Yet his exit was as calm and haughty and dignified as his life had been. "Why weep," he said to an attendant by his bedside. "Did you think me immortal?" Then he bade a polite and kindly farewell to all around him, blessed the little Dauphin, earnestly besought his counsellors to keep the land at peace, and passed quietly away.



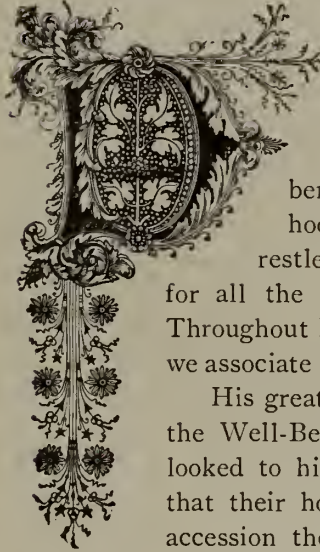
ANNOUNCING THE REVOCATION OF THE EDICT OF NANTES



LOUIS XV. AT THE DEATH-BED OF LOUIS XIV.

Chapter XCIV

THE DECAY OF THE FRENCH MONARCHY UNDER LOUIS XV.



DEATH had spared Louis XIV. too long. He had outlived his fame and his era. Absolutism had been tried and had failed; and Frenchmen, having been reduced all to the same level of nothingness beneath Louis, began to recognize their own brotherhood and to talk of the equality of man. They were restless under the aged despot's heavy hand, blamed him for all the country had suffered, and hailed his death with joy. Throughout France there were cheers and merry-makings, such as we associate with births and weddings, rather than with death.

His great-grandson, Louis XV. (1715-1774), was nicknamed the Well-Beloved; and with perennial enthusiasm the people looked to him to end all their sufferings. They knew, however, that their hopes must be deferred for a little while, since at his accession the Well-Beloved was, as his predecessor had been, a child of only five years.

The Duke of Orleans, a Prince of the Bourbons descended from Louis XIII., was made Regent; and no one expected any good of him. He was an able man, but thoroughly self-centred, licentious, and debauched. He had been openly accused by the populace of scheming to poison the entire race of Louis XIV., and thus clear his own path to the throne. Now only the feeble little Louis XV. and Philip of Spain remained between Orleans and this goal. Philip had formally renounced all claim to the French throne, when he acquired Spain. So, if little Louis died, Orleans would be King of France. The child

did not die, and that seems a sufficient answer to the charges against Orleans. He was too wise a man to lead the uneasy and dangerous existence of a great criminal.

Philip of Spain, however, believed all the rumors against his relative, and hated him. He even announced that, in case Louis XV. perished, he would reassert his own abandoned claim to France sooner than see Orleans profit by these wholesale deaths. So here were France and Spain already quarrelling with each other, the Pyrenees re-erected, and Louis XIV.'s dream of fusing the two lands into one great Bourbon monarchy, had perished with his other schemes.

In 1717, France actually formed an alliance with her enemies, England and Holland, to guard against Philip's pretensions to the throne. A war followed, in which Spain was completely humbled, though rather by England than by France.

This was the period of the "Mississippi Bubble" (1716-1720), the most gigantic stock-jobbing operation the world has yet known. We have seen that Louis XIV. had left the finances of France in utter disorder. John Law, a Scotch gambler, undertook to set them straight. His idea was the same as has been repeatedly advanced since by ignorant financiers, that the government should issue mere paper money, promising to exchange it for real gold and silver on demand. The paper was so much more convenient than the heavy metals that Law thought people would prefer it, and, as they would not know how much of it was given out, the government could go on increasing its paper money indefinitely, pay off all its debts, and be as extravagant as it pleased.

With this, Law united another plan, better known, though really less important. He formed a commercial company under government protection, to develop the resources of France's American territory, the Mississippi Valley.

At first, he was so successful that the Regent took an enthusiastic interest in his schemes. The country went crazy over the Mississippi project. Reports were circulated of the discovery of marvellous mines there, bursting with gold and silver. The shares of the company, which had been issued to sell at \$100 each, were sold for ten, twenty, and at last even forty times their value. All the hoarded wealth of France was brought out, with which to speculate. Nobles sold their jewels and family plate to buy stock. Metal money was so inconvenient in such large sums that the paper of the government was accepted blindly, and passed swiftly from hand to hand. Nearly a billion dollars of it was soon in circulation, while all France contained less than a quarter of that amount in actual coin.

Law was terrified by his own success. He tried vainly to check the government's reckless issues of paper. He knew that his Mississippi shares could not possibly be worth the enormous sums people paid for them. The shrewder

speculators also became alarmed. They began to sell their shares of stock, and hoard in gold the enormous wealth they had acquired. This resulted in a demand on the government for metal in exchange for its paper, and soon the government had no metal to give.

Then the crash came. Those who had the government paper could buy nothing with it. Those who held the Mississippi stock could scarce give it away. It was worthless. The government itself refused to accept its own paper for taxes. A few lucky speculators had made vast fortunes; but thousands of families, especially among the wealthier classes, were ruined. Suicides were numerous. Law barely escaped being torn to pieces, and fled in abject poverty from France.

The Duke of Orleans, detested by all those victims who attributed their ruin to the government, died in 1723; but it was not until 1726 that the boy king, Louis, took any direct part in state affairs. His first act looked promising. He dismissed the evil counsellors of the regency and appointed as his prime minister his own tutor, Bishop, and afterwards Cardinal, Fleury (1726–1743).

Fleury was an honorable and able man, very cautious—too cautious, said his enemies—and growing old. He avoided war so far as he could, and allowed the country a chance to prosper by giving it peace. Public sentiment in France forced him into a struggle with Austria in 1733; and the two aged rivals of Louis XIV.'s later days, Prince Eugene and Marshal Villars, found themselves once more in the field. Villars, after two brilliant campaigns in Italy, died of age and exhaustion, and peace soon followed.

During these years of prosperity France, by her avoidance of war, regained much of her ancient strength and prestige; and when Frederick of Prussia and Maria Theresa began their remarkable struggles, France was once more regarded as the foremost state of Europe.

As such she took a leading part in the general scramble after Maria Theresa's dominions. Fleury died in the midst of it (1743), and Louis XV., in imitation of his great-grandfather, announced that henceforward he would be his own minister. In reality, he was at that hour in the hands of an energetic and patriotic woman, his mistress, the Duchess of Chateauroux.

Under her urgency, Louis took a vigorous personal part in the widespread war, from which as yet France had gained little credit. England, Holland, and all the minor states had by this time ranged themselves on the side of Austria, while France had for allies Prussia and Spain. Louis put his trust in a half German general, Marshal Saxe, and with him advanced his armies into the old battle-ground of Flanders, now an Austrian possession. They won several victories, especially the celebrated battle of Fontenoy, and captured several cities,

both in Flanders and in Italy. Frederick of Prussia got what he wanted, and abandoned the French alliance. France, thus left alone, once more maintained herself single-handed against Europe. The heroic times of the preceding century seemed come again. Louis and his general pushed on from victory to victory, always offering peace. It was the one brilliant period of his reign.

Once during the war Louis fell dangerously ill at Metz. He thought he was dying, so dismissed the Duchess of Chateauroux, who was tending him with real devotion, and prepared to make a goodly and sanctimonious end. He had as yet done nothing personally to relieve his people, but they attributed to him the benefits of Cardinal Fleury's rule, and he was still the "Well-Beloved." All France prayed for him, and burst into almost hysterical joy when he recovered. "What have I done," cried Louis in amaze, "that these people should love me so?" His first act was to send for his discarded mistress to come back again; but she died soon after.

With her perished the King's ardor for war. A general treaty of peace was finally made in 1748. By it France, which had won so many victories and expended so much blood and wealth, gained nothing. Louis had always boasted that he would "make peace like a King, not like a tradesman." He seemed only anxious indeed to get back to his pleasures, and agreed to whatever terms his adversaries suggested.

He had never been much of a man at best—lazy, ignorant, vastly afraid of appearing ridiculous, cold, and proud. But now he entered upon the second period of his life, that of open indulgence in every licentious debauchery. He became a mere animal, a beast, as utterly unfit to rule as a madman, with France for the mere instrument of his foul pleasures. His name has become a synonym for all that is contemptibly vile. He fell into the hands of a new mistress, the wife of an army-contractor, and ennobled her with the title of Madame de Pompadour. Until her death, in 1764, she was the real ruler of France, and ruled it to its ruin.

It was she who had urged the weak peace of 1748; and when the terrible Seven Years' War between Prussia and Austria broke out, she insisted that France should interfere and support Maria Theresa, her only reason being that the Austrian Empress, eager for the alliance, had condescended to be gracious to the Pompadour, and had treated her as if she were a real queen. Her incompetent favorites were made the generals of France, and led their armies to defeat and disgrace. You may recall how they fled from the Prussians at Rossbach. When peace was made in 1763, France's naval power had been destroyed, and she surrendered to England all the best of her enormous colonial possessions in India and America. The War had settled decisively that England and not France should be the great colonial empire.

Yet in her frivolous, incompetent way, Madame Pompadour meant well. She would have liked to improve the condition of the poor people, had it not been too troublesome. She wanted to patronize art, but failed to recognize its true expression, so that her period has been nicknamed "the age of bad taste." She did, indeed, receive and make quite a fuss over the grandest of musicians, Mozart; but alas, it was only because he came to her, not as a man, but as an infant prodigy, barely six years old, to bow and scrape like a little courtier and perform upon a piano which he could hardly reach.

Can you imagine the court that surrounded Louis and this mistress? It has been aptly said that, through each of the Bourbon reigns, the courtiers acquired the vices of their King, without his virtues. From Henry IV. they caught his licentiousness, without his glory; from Louis XIII. his weakness, without humility; from Louis XIV. haughty pride, without perseverance; from the Duke of Orleans atheism and idleness, without ability; and now from Louis XV. utter debauchery, without the single trifling good point we can find in him. He was ashamed of himself; they were not. He tried to hide from the nation he had abused and disgraced. He refused audience to all except his intimates, and even built a private road from Versailles to St. Denis, passing around outside of Paris, that he need not face the reproachful eyes of his capital. His name, "the Well-Beloved," had become a scorn and a sarcasm.

Louis understood very clearly that the fearful discontent and suffering in France must lead to destruction of some nature, yet he took no steps to relieve it. "Our world will last our time," he said cynically to his intimates, "after us let the deluge come if it will." "After us, the deluge." The words have acquired an evil notoriety hardly equalled by any other quotation in history.

One of the King's last acts was to wed his heir, his young grandson, Louis, to a bright, frivolous, little Austrian Princess, Marie Antoinette. This new grand-daughter quite charmed the old roué, and for a moment the court reformed just a little bit under her influence. She was the centre of all the gayety, while her rather heavy young husband gloomed in the background.

This spasm of virtue soon passed; the King sought yet lower deeps of debauchery and evil. To this period belongs the horrible "famine contract," as it was called. We cannot give all its details; but the King made a law forbidding the export of grain. Then, as the grain lay wasting on his subjects' hands, he and his partners bought it for almost nothing. Other laws produced an artificial famine, and the royal conspirators doled out food to the starving people at enormous prices. This hideous trafficking in starvation and death was repeated again and again. At length one of the members of the trust was troubled in conscience, and half-confessed what was being done. He was promptly imprisoned, but too late! The nation knew of this new and dastardly misuse of

the royal authority, this last and most shameful betrayal of the people by their master.

In 1774, Louis once more fell ill, this time of malignant smallpox. The only fear of the nation now was that he would recover. He did not. He died, and his body was hurried into a coffin too small for it, and driven off at a gallop to the royal burial place in St. Denis, the people hooting and scoffing at the remains as they bumped along the road.



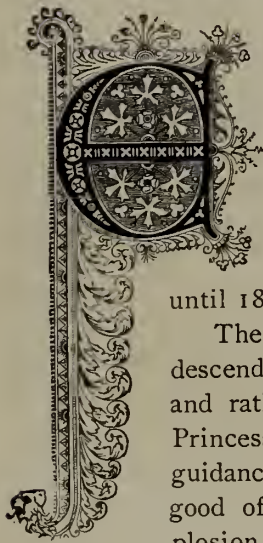
THE BATTLE OF MALPLAQUET



LOUIS XVI. AND HIS FAMILY IN PRISON

Chapter XCV

LOUIS XVI. AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION



VEN in the court of Louis XV. there had been a small party opposed to his evil ways. This was headed by his son, the Dauphin, an honest, well-meaning man, who lived in retirement with his wife and their three little sons, each of whom was to become in turn King of France. They were Louis XVI., Louis XVIII., and Charles X., the last of whom survived until 1836, within the memory of men still living.

The Dauphin died before his father, and so the throne descended to the eldest of the three boys, Louis XVI., the heavy and rather stupid lad, who had married the pretty Austrian Princess, Marie Antoinette. Brought up under his father's guidance, Louis XVI. really desired and meant to labor for the good of his people. To understand, therefore, the terrific explosion which led to his dethronement and execution, we must look a little more closely at the France which was now seething beneath the feet of its Bourbon kings and their heedless court.

The people were divided into three classes—the three Estates, as they were called: the nobility, the clergy, and the common folk. The two highest Estates had many “privileges” of one sort or another, which released them from almost all taxation. It was an old saying that the priests paid their taxes in prayer, the nobles in blood—that is, by defending the country—and the com-

mon people in money. But the nobles had long ceased to give much blood for France, except in theory; and the prayers of the court clergy were such as no man would consider of special value.

Neither of these two Estates, however, ever dreamed of justifying their existence by work, and so the whole burden of supporting the country fell upon the laboring class. Poor *Jacques*, crouching humbly at the bottom of the ladder, must pay for all. He must supply the blood and the money too; as for prayer, that had ceased to be reckoned as of much account. Let us be careful, however, lest we do injustice by too sweeping an assertion. Some noble families there were, who, despite the commands of Louis XIV., remained upon their lands and sought to improve the condition of their people. The clergy, too, were sharply divided into two classes, the rich bishops and abbés of the court, and the poor country priests, who had no hand in collecting the enormous revenues of the church, and were almost as close upon starvation as their parishioners. These poorer clergy were often men of the purest and highest type, and they almost alone kept alive the light of Christianity. When the upheaval came, they took their stand with the people and against their oppressors.

For over a century the exorbitant taxes upon the country peasant had been persistently increased, until of his scanty earnings about one-third went to the King, one-third to the Church, and he must exist on the remainder as best he could. Nor was it only by money exactions that the hand of government pressed him down. There were other and even more unendurable cruelties put upon him by evil officials who despised him, by tyrannous nobles against whose caprices he had no redress.

Most irritating of these impositions, perhaps, was the *corvée*, a law compelling the peasantry to give a certain amount of their time to repairing the public roads. Well administered, this law might have proved no serious inconvenience; but it was grossly abused. The peasant was compelled to abandon his own work for the King's whenever called, though his crops might be rotting on the ground. Moreover, the officials were by no means careful to keep him toiling solely on the roads; they were apt to set him at any other government work, or even at some private business of their own. It was the oppressive manner in which this *corvée* was exacted that more than anything else embittered the humble people against their masters.

These down-trodden peasants, however, were scarce the men to launch a revolution, unless, indeed, it were another *Jacquerie*, a frenzied outburst of despair and destruction. For the deliberate planning of a new government they had neither the wit, nor energy, nor strength. All they could do was to submit in helpless ignorance, until cleverer men showed them a way to break their chains.

Then, indeed, they followed blindly, with the reckless fury and desperation of ravenous beasts.

For the beginning of the French Revolution, therefore, we must look to yet a fourth class, one lacking official recognition among the Estates. This was the body of better-grade tradespeople, the city dwellers, who had no land to seize upon, and who by their shrewdness managed to escape taxation almost as well as the upper Estates. They formed what may be called an intermediate grade, from which the ranks of the nobles and government officials were constantly replenished. From them came most of the intelligence of France,—the lawyers, the scholars, and the business men.

Their influence had greatly increased since the time of Louis XIV. In his day there had been only the one court, the centre of all life and wealth in France, dominated by his thoughts, his will. But in the idle regency of the Duke of Orleans, this court had split into dozens of little circles, or *salons*, as they were called, held at the mansion of some wealthy lord or brilliant woman. Each of these salons had a tone and an individuality of its own. Each, desirous of outshining the others, encouraged art and literature, and took pride in its own brilliancy and wit.

The secret and shameful life of Louis XV. left the salons to grow even more important. They became the main features of French society. Middle class folk, who would have been nothing in Louis XIV.'s court, were central figures in the salons, whose members having begun by discussing philosophy, soon advanced to speculation on principles of government, the rights of kings, the equality of man, and other ideas diametrically opposed to the tyranny under which they lived.

This class also had its heavy grievances against royalty, chief of which, perhaps, was the use of the *lettres de cachet*. These were letters issued by the King, ordering a man's secret arrest without trial or explanation, and his imprisonment during the King's pleasure, in the dreaded state-prison, the Bastille. These *lettres de cachet* had been terrible enough when used by a great and just minister like Richelieu. In Louis XV.'s hands they became nightmares of horror. He used to issue them with blanks for the name of the victim, and sell them to his favorites, who in turn sold them to any villain who would pay high enough for the chance to rid himself in secret of a foe. Imagine the agony these letters caused, dropping like a thunderbolt upon innocent men, who had perhaps committed no offense whatever, and were utterly unconnected with the court! The unfortunate simply disappeared from the world. If he had influential friends to seek him, he might after a time be released. Otherwise he would rot in the Bastille. It is said that in the fifteen years just before the Revolution these *lettres de cachet* found fourteen thousand victims.

It is to this middle class that we naturally look for leaders, mouthpieces to give voice to the sufferings of those beneath. There were three men who so guided and directed the thought of France during this period, that they are often said to have created the French Revolution. They were the three writers—Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau.

Montesquieu wrote a thoughtful work, "The Spirit of Laws," analyzing the meaning and purpose and justice of government in general. Voltaire, the greatest and most famous of the trio, wrote with wild vehemence against sham and injustice wherever he recognized it, whether in king or courtesan. *Lettres de cachet* were issued against him fifteen times. The influence of his friends and the fame of his genius released him again and again from the Bastille; but finally he had to flee from France and live in banishment.

Still more dangerous to the government was the third writer, Jean Jacques Rousseau. Voltaire spoke to kings and lords; Rousseau wrote for the common people. While Voltaire moved one man, Rousseau swayed hundreds. He was incoherent and unjust. He called for the abolition of all society, and declared that man must seek happiness in a return to his independent savage state. He was too absurd a man, the government thought, to be considered seriously! But his half-true errors were just the kind to influence ignorant men.

All Europe saw whither France was drifting. Revolution was in the air. Young Louis XVI., hearing of his accession to the throne, cast himself on his knees with his young wife, and cried: "God help us, we are too young to reign!"

Voltaire dared to come back from his exile (1778), and was received by the Parisians with kingly honors. The whole Royal Academy came out to greet him. When he went for an airing in the streets, his carriage could hardly make its way through the huzzaing crowds. But both he and Rousseau died. Montesquieu was already dead. The irresistible movement swept on without them.

After a century of financial mismanagement, the government tottered on the verge of bankruptcy. No one would lend it money, or trust its word. No more taxes could possibly be squeezed out of the wretched Third Estate. Louis XVI. appointed a capable minister, Turgot, who saw that the only possible way to safety was to draw taxes from the two upper Estates. The moment, however, he thus attacked their "privileges," both nobles and clergy raised such a tumult that the weak King could not withstand them. He knew that the minister was right. "Only Turgot and I care for the good of France," he sighed. But he could not endure the din in his ears made by the entire court, and he dismissed Turgot for peace's sake.

So the heedless court drifted on. Our own American Revolution was in

progress, and the mass of Frenchmen watched it with delighted interest. Was it not the direct expression of the very principles of freedom that their philosophers and writers were teaching? Public sentiment finally forced the King to lend us a helping hand, though he did it unwillingly, not at all sure that he was wise in encouraging revolution, no matter how far away from his own household.

The war was successful, but it only brought France an increased debt, and swept her nearer the inevitable end. In 1787, the government summoned all its leading supporters, the "Notables" of the kingdom, to a conference, to invent a way of continuing to exist. Taxation of the upper Estates was again hinted at; and again the Notables protested, and would do nothing more. So at last a desperate expedient was resolved upon. A meeting of the *States-General* was announced for 1789.

The States-General was an assembly supposed to represent the entire nation. It had not met for nearly two centuries, the Bourbon kings having made themselves absolute and having ruled without it. In the old days it had consisted of about nine hundred representatives, three hundred from each of the three Estates. Each Estate had voted separately on any law proposed, and if two of the three were opposed to it, it failed.

At once the question agitated France, Was this old rule of voting to be adhered to? It was the Third Estate which now supported the country. If its representatives were to be hopelessly out-voted by the other two, the States-General would be as useless as the recent gathering of "Notables" had been. Even the King saw that. So he decreed that instead of three hundred, the people should elect six hundred representatives to the Third Estate. The common folk were delighted with this concession, great things were hoped for from the assembly, and the delegates were chosen and instructed with anxious care.

Shrewder men saw that this increased representation was only a subterfuge, if the Estates were still to vote separately. What mattered it how many men were in the Third Estate, if their united voice was still to be but one against the other two? So when the widely discussed assembly met, the delegates of the Third Estate were in no pleasant frame of mind. Every one waited anxiously for the King to settle the important question. Were the Estates to act separately or together?

There were five weeks of tedious and useless evasion by Louis. Then he made a polite speech of welcome to the assembly, and at its close bade the three orders separate as of old to their different halls. There was no word of any change in voting. The Third Estate sat in their seats dejected and disappointed; they did not move. The King's master of ceremonies returned in surprise and repeated the royal order, that they should retire to their hall. Had they obeyed, the world's history might have been different.

One man rose to the occasion and seized it, thereby creating modern France and modern constitutional Europe. This was Honoré de Mirabeau, a son of the nobility, who had been abused and disowned by his father and his class. He had become a writer and a champion of the people. Already he had proved himself a moderate man, having by his speeches restrained the peasantry of southern France from an open and hopeless revolt. Now he came as their delegate to the convention; and he saw that revolt here might have a better ending. He sprang to his feet and made a fiery speech, ending with: "Tell your master that we are here by the will of the people, and only bayonets can drive us out." The Revolution had begun.

After that matters progressed swiftly. The Third Estate declared itself the "National Assembly," and invited the delegates of the other Estates to join it. The poorer clergy did so at once, and after a while were followed by some of the nobles, headed by the King's cousin, Philip, Duke of Orleans, an evil man, who hoped by humoring the people to become Regent, or possibly King.

Under Mirabeau's leadership the National Assembly declared that henceforth France should be a constitutional monarchy, and they set themselves to draw up a constitution. They intended merely to limit the power of their sovereign; but the unfortunate nature of Louis XVI., and even more that of his queen, soon made compromise impossible.

The haughty Marie Antoinette, the spoiled darling of two reigns, was furious against this rabble who dared oppose their King. She wanted to crush them by force. Louis would have done anything for peace, but he loved his wife and craved her approval. Besides, he was ever harassed by the dread weak men feel, of appearing weak. So the court dawdled without any definite policy. One moment Louis praised the National Assembly, the next he threatened it. The air was heavy with uncertainty and deceit. An explosion became inevitable.

The King began to mass soldiers around Paris. Should the people wait to have their leaders arrested, and themselves shot down? The Assembly demanded the withdrawal of the troops. The people cried for arms to defend themselves. In a sudden uprising, they burst open the royal armory and seized swords and muskets, and even cannon. The King was alarmed, and withdrew such troops as had already entered the city.

The people seized the opportunity. The Bastille, the execrated prison to which they might be hurried off without warning, frowned among them almost unguarded. There does not seem to have been any pre-arranged plan, but "To the Bastille!" was shouted upon all sides. Men and women rushed thither with their newly snatched-up weapons. Two hundred Swiss soldiers defended it under the governor, De Launay. There was a regular pitched battle, and an

assault, in which many were slain. It was the first bloodshed of the Revolution, and Frenchmen commemorate Bastille Day, July 14, as we do the Fourth of July, our Independence Day.

After several hours of determined resistance, De Launay surrendered on the promise of safety. But these were not cultured gentlefolk, who had attacked him. They were the ignorant masses, whom he and his kind had trampled into brutes. Now they had gone mad, as brutes do, and had possession of the arms hitherto turned against them. The gates of the Bastille were thrown open, and the mob surged in. With their dead behind them, what did they care for their leaders' promises? The strong castle was laid in ruins; the governor and many of his men were slain, and their severed heads were carried through the streets on pikes. Paris tasted its first draught of blood.

"Then it is a revolt?" exclaimed Louis XVI. in astonishment. "Nay, sire, it is a revolution," answered the messenger.

Even this oft-related answer fell short of the truth. It is well to note that from this time forward there were really two revolutions—one of thoughtful, reasonable men, who desired reform, and one of savage and irrational beasts, who sought only destruction and revenge. Sometimes the two parties worked together, sometimes in fiercest opposition.

The King, in his bewilderment over the Bastille attack, did everything the people wished. But they no longer trusted him. His concessions only frightened his nobles, many of whom, feeling their cause was lost, fled from France, and the plots of these "Emigrants" became one of the chief dangers of the years that followed.

Lafayette, our hero of the American Revolution, was now made commander of the royal forces, most of whose members were heart and soul with the insurgents. Lafayette, though trusted by both parties, could control neither. He could only act as an intermediary to save them from direct conflict. As the colors of his new "National Guard," he chose red and blue, the colors of the city of Paris, and placed between them white, the color of the royal flag. Thus he originated the famous "tri-color"—the red, white, and blue—emblem of French liberty.

Marie Antoinette brought about the next explosion. She was still eager to use force. If her husband's troops could no longer be trusted, let him ask help of her Austrian kinsmen. She encouraged the royalist sentiments of the nobles who still clung to the court; and there was a foolish and spectacular feast at Versailles, at which the queen made a speech, and the young officers swore devotion to her, tore the tricolors from their uniforms, and trampled them under foot.

Paris heard of this feast; and Paris at the time was short of bread. The

lack of food was not King Louis's fault, but remembering the famine contracts of his predecessor, we can scarcely blame the people that they held him guilty. And here were feasters trampling on the nation's emblem, while the nation starved. More work for the Paris mob! A great horde, largely composed of women, marched out to Versailles.

Both King and Queen were near to death that day. The palace guard were beaten down, yet Louis hesitated, would not order them "to fire upon women." Lafayette, rushing madly through the halls of the palace to defend the King, heard a lackey call after him: "Monsieur, his Majesty permits you to enter his presence." It was the last cry of the old France, utterly incapable of comprehending the new.

Marie Antoinette faced the mob with superb courage. Their muskets were lowered before her in unwilling admiration. Lafayette coming between, knelt and kissed the Queen's hand; and the mob cheered them both. She was saved for the time; but with the King and their little son, the Dauphin Louis, she was forced to go to Paris with the rabble.

Half-cheering, half-hooting, the women of the streets paraded the delicate Queen along the road. "We have got the bread baker!" they cried, "and his wife, and their little apprentice!"

Both Louis and the National Assembly tried to gloss over this "Day of the Women" (October 6, 1789), but whatever words of courtesy and compliment they might use, Louis was no longer a king; he was a prisoner in Paris. Mirabeau, the great leader of the assembly, died. Louis made a desperate attempt to flee with his family from France, disguised as a travelling merchant. He was recognized by the citizens of Varennes, arrested, and brought back to strict confinement.

Yet the moderate party of the Assembly triumphed for a moment, Louis was once more released, and was declared head of a constitutional monarchy. A new legislature was regularly elected. But when Louis vetoed some extreme measures, the mob again threatened him. This was in the summer of 1792, and events now hurried rapidly. Lafayette, being too loyal, was deserted by his soldiers, and had to flee to the Austrian troops, who imprisoned him as a traitor to the King he had striven so hard to save.

Prussia declared war against France in Louis's defense; and the Paris rabble, suspecting, as was indeed true, that the King had himself encouraged Prussia's attitude, made the last of its many assaults upon the royal palace. Three hundred of the King's Swiss guards were cut to pieces, and their dead bodies hacked and hewed by the delirious mob. Louis and his family were placed in prison. Suspected traitors, "aristocrats," to the number of nearly a thousand, had been confined in the Paris jails. The mob took possession of the

prisons under the order of Danton, the Minister of Justice, and murdered all the prisoners with a mere pretence of trial. These were the notorious "September massacres."

Austria, in the name of its daughter, Marie Antoinette, had joined Prussia in attacking France. As the foes advanced, the French patriots, madly in love with their new "Liberty," rose as one man to oppose them. A young artillery officer, Roget de L'Isle, had written a patriotic song, the "Marseillaise." He sang it to a gathering of friends, and they, thrilled by its stirring strains, spread the music everywhere through France. It became the national hymn, and the people, chanting it in every village, gathered against the enemies of France and Liberty.

A new assembly, the "National Convention," was summoned, and its first act was to declare the land a republic (September 21, 1792). Then the King was tried as a traitor. He was summoned before the Convention, not as King, but as "Louis Capet," and was condemned to death, and executed (January 21, 1793). The ancient French monarchy, which had lasted nearly a thousand years, fell with a crash; and men looked in wonderment and fear at the headless kingdom, and the dead body of the headless King.



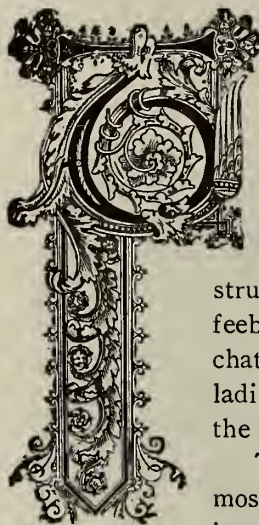
PATRIOTS MARCHING TO THE MARSEILLAISE



THE REIGN OF TERROR

Chapter XCVI

THE FIRST FRENCH REPUBLIC AND THE RISE OF NAPOLEON



THE French Revolution was far too vast an event to be pictured within the bounds of a single chapter. We have done no more than outline its chief features. You must fill in the details for yourself: the shrieking fear and streaming blood; the clamorous starvation and silent heroism; noble speeches by members of the Assembly, and revolting deeds by their supporters; bodies strung from lamp-posts by the Paris mob, and all France a feeble but yet more barbarous reflection of its capital; chateaux aflame, highborn lords tortured to death, and gentle ladies fleeing for their lives:—amid such evil portents was the first French Republic born.

The men who had led the National Assembly of 1789 had most of them disappeared in 1792. A far wilder and more ignoble set were coming into control,—demagogues, trucklers to the rabble. The Convention which announced the republic was divided between two parties, the moderates, or Girondists, and the extremists, or Jacobins; and there was constant strife between them.

The dreaded Prussians had already invaded France. At first they were everywhere successful; but the new spirit rousing in the French people was not to be defeated, and on the day before the announcement of the Republic, General Kellerman, with a body of raw recruits, checked the Prussian advance at Valmy. In the fall of the same year the Austrians were defeated at Jemmapes, and the

troops of the French Republic found themselves masters of all Flanders, the modern Belgium.

So the new government began with a flourish of military glory. It had conquered a territory which Louis XIV., in the height of his power, had been unable to win. The Convention passed laws at a tremendous rate. Everything ancient was to be abandoned, and the French world constructed entirely anew. Some of the steps taken were able, some evil, some hopelessly absurd. The Christian worship was declared abolished. Death was voted to be the end of all things. The Age of Reason was declared begun, and a courtesan was hailed as its goddess.

Even our ancient friend the calendar was assailed, and time was redivided. The revolutionists still counted by months, but weeks were obliterated, and instead of our blessed seventh day of rest, they had a ten-day period, with its holiday at the end. The months were redistributed and renamed; all time was to be counted as beginning September 21, 1792, the year one, of the Republic. The republicans even ventured to look beyond France, and proclaimed that their country would "Grant aid and fraternity to all peoples who may wish to recover their liberty." Through this fall and winter of 1793 every Frenchman seemed to feel that a millennium was at hand.

These dreams came to a rude awakening after the execution of King Louis. Such deeds seem always to recoil upon their perpetrators. All Europe united in war against the reckless Republic. England, Holland, Spain, and the German Empire added their forces to those of Prussia and Austria. Dumouriez, the victor of Jemmapes and the chief general of France, was defeated by the allies and driven from Belgium. He declared himself opposed to the government of the Convention, and even made an abortive attempt to lead his soldiers against Paris.

His men refused to follow him; but other portions of France made a more determined protest against the mad legislation proceeding from the capital. In Brittany, the Chouans, as they were called, had for some time defied the Republic. Now the peasants of the Vendée, the region around Nantes, declared themselves loyal to the ancient order of things, the monarchy. Their chief leaders were the peasant Cadoudal and the young Count Henri of Larochejaquelin. Under these two, the heroic peasantry defeated one republican army after another. "If I retreat," cried Count Henri, "kill me! But if I advance, follow me; and if I fall, avenge me!"

At the same time the strife in the Convention itself grew so bitter that the extremists, the Jacobins, backed by the Paris mob, declared their antagonists, the Girondists, to be traitors, and ordered the arrest of the entire party. Some were seized; others fled, and roused many of the cities of southern France to

rebel against the Jacobite tyranny. Marseilles, Lyons, Bordeaux, and Caen all rose in arms. The allies invaded the north, the Spaniards crossed the Pyrenees. In August (1793) the naval fortress of Toulon, with the entire Mediterranean fleet, was voluntarily surrendered to the English. The fortunes of Republican France had reached their lowest ebb.

The Jacobins of Paris had in their ranks monsters of cruelty; but they had also some master genuises of energy. Never, perhaps, has any party put forth such stupendous efforts. The spirit of their new-found freedom made them giants. They faced their enemies on every side, and the fall of 1793 saw them everywhere victorious. Carnot, their minister of war, raised fourteen different armies. He ordered the generals to waste no time in military manœuvres, but simply to march on, wherever they say the enemy, and charge them with fixed bayonets.

The enthusiasm of the raw French troops proved equal to the task thus imposed on them. They were not now led by royalist officers, whom they hated, but by chiefs risen from among themselves. Valor might make any man of them a general. Jourdan, Pichegru, and Hoche, the most successful of their leaders, won victory after victory, until early in 1795 Pichegru conquered Holland and annexed it to the French Republic, his soldiers performing the remarkable feat of riding out on the ice and capturing the Dutch fleet, where it lay, frozen fast. Thereupon the next neighbors of France, Prussia and Spain, both sued for peace, making voluntary surrenders of territory to escape the wrath of the new-born Colossus.

Meanwhile, the internal rebellion was also crushed. Kleber, sent against the Vendéans, won four battles in eleven days. The cities of the south were defeated, Lyons being captured after a siege of over two months and given up to pillage. Its principal buildings and churches were destroyed, and the Jacobin army opened an indiscriminate cannon fire on the defenceless citizens, killing a couple of thousand or more. The other rebellious cities surrendered in a panic. Toulon was recaptured from the English (December, 1793), having been skilfully made untenable to the foe by a young artillery officer, whose name France now heard for the first time. It was Napoleon Bonaparte.

But these days of Jacobin triumph were days of horror in the capital. The awful "Reign of Terror" had begun. After the proscription of the Girondists (June, 1793), no man's life was safe. The successful party were determined that no tenderness of heart should rob them of their victory. The official system of execution adopted was the guillotine, a machine that at a single stroke severed the head from the body. Every day this insatiate monster was fed with victims of both sexes.

Men became brutalized with much slaughter. They lost all conception of

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